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TAGS: [KDEM](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SECON](#) [EINV](#) [EPET](#) [GV](#)
SUBJECT: AN INVESTOR'S PERCEPTION OF DADIS

Classified By: BRIANA WARNER FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶11. (C) Summary: Former Assistant Secretary of State and career Foreign Service Officer Herman Cohen visited Conakry from September 6-9 as a consultant to American oil-interest Hyperdynamics (HDY) (reftel). Cohen, who joined the HDY board in July, met with several members of the GOG during his trip, including CNDD President Moussa Dadis Camara. In a meeting with A/DCM and Econoff on September 9, Cohen described his meeting with Dadis and voiced his opinion that USG policy toward Guinea is misdirected. Cohen argued that Dadis may actually have a positive influence in Guinea. END SUMMARY.

DISCUSSIONS WITH A DICTATOR

¶12. (C) Reportedly, Cohen and HDY CEO Ray Leonard met with Dadis at Camp Alpha Yaya at 1:30am on September 7. After waiting several hours for their appointment, the HDY delegation was invited into Dadis' office with a group of high-ranking CNDD officials including Minister of Defense Sekouba Konate, and Secretary General of the Presidency Moussa Keita. After a half hour, Dadis asked Cohen to join him in a private room while Leonard discussed the HDY contract with the rest of the group.

¶13. (C) When the men were alone, Dadis apparently began discussing US-Guinea relations. According to Cohen, Dadis said that he is very disappointed with the USG position toward the CNDD. He also apparently went on to say that the US does not have a coherent policy when it comes to coups, giving the example of support for the President of Mauritania.

¶14. (C) Dadis highlighted that the CNDD has "smashed the narcotics trade without aid from the US" and has "come a long way to stop corruption." He then reportedly asked Cohen what his next course of action should be.

¶15. (C) Cohen suggested that Dadis "take off his uniform and run for office," citing Amadou Toumani Toure of Mali as an example that Dadis could follow. Cohen then said that Dadis should "get back to constitutionalism." In response, Dadis told Cohen that it would be impossible to give up power, as it would create an opportunity for another coup. He reportedly voiced his concern over the disintegration of the military, noting that there is little discipline or order within the armed forces. Because of the fragility of the military's cohesiveness, Dadis believes that there will be another coup.

DADIS NOT SO BAD AFTER ALL

¶6. (C) Cohen told A/DCM that he believes that Dadis may turn out to be a good leader for Guinea. According to Cohen, Dadis seems to have Guinea's best interest in mind. While "democracy is another thing," he thinks that Dadis could use his position to help counteract narcotics trafficking, despite the fact that he may not ever support free and fair elections. Noting his feeling that US policy is misdirected, he recommended that the Embassy embark on a new policy of dialogue with the CNDD. According to Cohen, Dadis is "desperate" to gain the favor of the US.

COMMENT

¶7. (C) Due to HDY's tenuous standing with the CNDD, Cohen has an interest in communicating with Guinea's current leaders. It is now almost required for any international investment interest to meet with the President, creating a bottleneck for contractual negotiation. While Cohen may genuinely think that current US policy toward Guinea is misdirected, his business interests may be a motivating factor in his assessment. A/DCM explained in detail the USG's policy position while highlighting key concerns about the junta's governance record to date, including continued indications of corruption, lack of follow through on anti-narcotics initiatives, and human rights abuses.

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